*This is a letter template for students who have been sanctioned or threatened with punishment for taking part in school strikes demanding action on climate change. You can use it or adapt it to give to school officials or send to local decision-makers who have threatened to punish you.*

*We are also monitoring which schools are trying to prevent students from striking. If this is happening in your case, please let us know at contact@crin.org*

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Since January this year, students from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have been penalised for taking part in school strikes demanding action on climate change. Many cases have been reported, with students being given warnings and hours of after-school detention on Saturdays. Teachers have also reportedly been assigning penalties to grades for students who missed tests on strike days.

By taking part in these demonstrations we are exercising our civil and political rights. The right to freedom of expression, freedom of association, freedom of assembly and the right to be heard are human rights recognised and protected by international human rights law. Everyone is entitled to these rights, including under-18s, and no one should be penalised for exercising them. On the contrary, we should be supported and not prevented from participating in civic life and engaging in a movement to promote action for the future of humanity. Fighting to protect the planet is in everyone’s interest, including yours.

Governments have a responsibility to act but, in the face of their inaction, we must mobilise. Our future depends on the actions taken today by the political class and the companies run by adults.

Instead of threatening us with punishment to make us compliant, you should be encouraging us to take part in this global movement. We have already received support from places like the United Nations. The Committee on the Rights of the Child, the United Nations’ body responsible for implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child, recently applauded the students taking part in the Fridays for Future protests. Other UN human rights experts joined the Committee, expressing their gratitude to young people for their actions that are "desperately needed in today’s political climate of lassitude and decision paralysis".

With this letter, we therefore ask you to immediately stop penalising students for taking part in the Fridays for Future climate protests.